

Make friends with “Mental Sweat”

If your brain isn't working hard, it isn't learning much.

Be active. Ask yourself “why” at the end of a paragraph or section of information. Actively make connections with what you are studying.

Try teaching a friend what you are trying to learn. Simple memorization may get you through the test, but it won't win a space in long-term memory. You will just have to learn it all over again next time.

Stress-meter

Be aware of your overall stress level. If you have a lot of emotional stress in your life, it will be very hard for you to learn. Know what things help you lessen your stress - exercise? listening to music? thinking about a peaceful place? a loving friend? Take charge of your stress level to open up space for learning (& just be happier in general!).

If you had a negative experience with learning in the past which makes it hard for you to take in information now, work with your teacher to overcome this fear.

Frequent visits to long-term storage.

Small but frequent doses of what you are trying to learn increases your learning!

For example, it is more effective to study for 20 minutes at a time over each of three days, than cram that same information in a one hour session right before the test. This secures a permanent place in your long term memory vault.

ZOOM focus

You learn best when you are just focusing on one thing.

Brain research has clearly shown that even though it seems that multi-tasking works, in fact, it makes your learning harder (really!).

Turn the television off.... and maybe even your cell phone AND Facebook page...if you want to make the best use of study time.

Repetition and rehearsal.

Just like any great athlete or musician, we learn through repetition and rehearsal of new information. It is especially important in the first 24 hours, after we have been introduced to something new.

BRAIN SMART LEARNING TIPS

Chunk or group information.

Some use mnemonics, creating a word or phrase out of the information you need to remember. For example, to memorize the lines on a music scale (EGBDF) many remember the phrase, “**Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge**”.

These types of tricks help you quickly find this information again in long term memory.

Good food & rest

Did you realize that your brain takes 30% of your daily energy?

Your brain won't be at its best without fuel. The good news is that you are actually learning when you sleep - letting the information you have been studying settle in or “consolidate”.

And don't forget to drink plenty of water each day!

Brain exercise

The brain is like a muscle; the more you use it, the stronger it grows. You control your brain's growth!